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female sex in all these particulars, appears to be much less marked at the Retreat than in nearly every other institution with which I am acquainted. This is worthy of notice, as it is probably due to the greater general regularity of life in the men of this community as compared with that of men in the community at large ; or, at least, than in those parts of it which furnish inmates to the asylums compared.

Retreat, York, August, 1844.

Notes on the Report of the Royal Commissioners on the Operation of the Poor Laws in Scotland, 1844. By J. P. ALISON, Esq., M.D.

[Read before the Statistical Section of the British Association at York, October 1st, 1844.]

DR. ALISON stated, that as the result of many of his own observations and inquiries, and those of others who had associated themselves with him to investigate this matter statistically in Scotland, had been read in the Statistical Section of the British Association, he was anxious to lay before them some extracts from the evidence, lately printed as an Appendix to the Report of the Royal Commissioners, who had been appointed to inquire into that subject, by which he thought that those previous statements were amply confirmed ; but that in laying these results before the Section, he would confine himself to facts, and as nearly as possible to statistical facts, and abstain from all discussion of remedial measures.

He said that, on one point the result of the inquiries of the Commissioners appeared at first sight to be at variance with his previous statements, viz., as to the number of poor, natives of country districts, who burden the larger towns in Scotland. It appears that, in general, about two-thirds of the regular paupers in those towns are not natives, and there is a general complaint in the towns, of this burden falling on them, in consequence of the defective relief in country districts, and of the law of settlement by three years' residence ; but the Commissioners report that there had been much exaggeration in those statements, and that there are few paupers in the towns who have not lived there many years ; therefore, that an extension of the term requisite for obtaining a settlement would make little difference in this respect.

On this he observed, that he had always represented the great mass of poor from the country, who resort to the towns in Scotland, as "coming originally in search of work," and afterwards becoming burdensome, not in the first instance as *paupers*, on the parish lists, but as *destitute poor*, subsisting, for the most part, on *voluntary* charity, either of individuals or associations ; and had explained how greatly the number of the destitute poor in Scotland *exceed* the number of regular paupers ; therefore, that the result of the inquiries of the Commissioners, being nearly confined to the statistics of the paupers, does not invalidate his previous assertion.

In illustration of this, he pointed out six different classes of persons, often reduced to extreme destitution in Scotland, but who do not in general appear on the lists of paupers at all, and referred to the evidence published by the Commissioners in proof of this ; and of all those he asserted, that they are found chiefly in the towns, seeking either for occasional employment, or for voluntary charity. He explained, 1. The

case of the *able-bodied* unemployed poor. 2. The case of the *temporarily* disabled by sickness or injury. 3. The case of applicants for the legal relief, to whom that relief is long delayed. 4. The case of those to whom relief is refused, because the Kirk Sessions "have not funds in hand" for them. 5. The case of those whose settlement is disputed, and interim relief refused. 6. The case of the "dissipated and undeserving poor," and their children, who are "kept at bay" by the parochial authorities; in consequence of which he said he had known various instances of children dying of the effects of cold and hunger.

Having thus explained the fallacy of the statement of the Royal Commissioners on this point, he proceeded to say that on all other points the evidence taken by the Commissioners not only amply confirmed his former statement, but in several instances exceeded his anticipation; and in proof of this he read extracts from the evidence as to the following particulars; almost all of those extracts being from the evidence of clergymen, magistrates, or other public functionaries.

1. The extent of destitution in many of the towns, the privations, as to food, fuel, and clothing, endured by many of the inhabitants, and the necessity of mendicity to support life, both in the case of regular paupers, and of persons excluded, on the grounds above stated, from the legal relief; especially in the case of able-bodied persons and their families, often of good character, and reduced by circumstances quite beyond their control.

2. The extent of vagrancy, consequent especially on depressions of trade in the manufacturing districts, extending from the Borders even to the Orkney Islands, and forcing on many practical observers the conviction, that some fund should be provided for supporting the unemployed at home.

3. The diffusion of fever, particularly of that new form of fever which has sprung up since 1842, almost exclusively in Scotland, and prevailed to an unprecedented extent, which has been proved by individual inquiries, extending to above 1,700 persons, to affect that minority of the population who are destitute and unemployed, not only in a *larger proportion*, but in an *absolutely greater number* than all the rest of the community; and has very frequently been diffused through the country by the destitute vagrants just mentioned.

4. The very inadequate allowances to widows, and the frequent neglect of orphans, and the consequence, distinctly resulting from this cause, and from the absence of any legal protection to the unemployed, in the increased temptation to crime. This was stated as the general result of observations made in all the gaols in Scotland, but was especially illustrated by tables, furnished by Mr. Brebner, governor of the gaol at Glasgow, one of which comprised 258 cases of persons committed to that gaol in one year, of whom he could say with certainty, that it was want, and not inclination, which led them to commit crimes; and others gave the particulars of no less than 79 persons, 72 of them females, who in one year became *voluntary* inmates of the gaol, secluding themselves from the world, and submitting to the discipline of a prison, for the sake of the protection it afforded. Many others sought a similar protection, and could not be admitted; and it having been thought necessary to dismiss these voluntary prisoners, as unfit inmates of a gaol, more than half of them returned in a short time as criminals, the sacrifice to which

they had formerly subjected themselves in order to avoid crime, furnishing the clearest evidence, that the crimes which they subsequently committed were the effect of want, not of vicious inclination.

5. The circumstances under which recourse has lately been had to assessments, as they are thought to be inevitable, in various towns in Scotland, particularly Inverness, Stirling, Arbroath, Stranraer, and Girvan, all illustrating the general fact, that the numbers and sufferings of the destitute poor had been rapidly increasing, and their feelings of independence had given way, *before* the assessments were ordered, so that no part of the increased destitution of those places could be referred to the assessments as its cause.

6. As a contrast to this increasing misery where there have been no assessments, the "sound and comfortable state" of Berwickshire as to its poor, where assessments have been long general, and the allowances to the poor, and even aid to the able-bodied when thrown out of employment, nearly on the same footing as in England; and where there is no beggary, very little intemperance, much industry, abundance of private charity, and a population almost stationary as to number.

7. Contrasting, again, with this state of Berwickshire, the miserable condition of the poor in the greater part of the highlands and islands, where the Poor Law is a dead letter, and the proprietors, in many instances, contribute nothing to the support of the poor, where the want of all the necessities of life is most severely felt, and a "parasitical population" has been gradually formed, engaged during the greater part of the year in no employment, and preying, not indeed on the capital, but on the industry of the country, and which must be removed or employed before any improvement can take place, but in which, nevertheless, early and improvident marriages are more complained of than in any other part of Scotland.

These last classes of facts were stated as fully and satisfactorily illustrating the propositions formerly laid down by the author, as to the effect of an adequate provision for the poor in *restraining* the increase of population, in two distinct ways, 1. By maintaining the standard of comfort among the people; and, 2. By making it the obvious and immediate interest of landed proprietors, to throw obstacles in the way of early marriages and excessive reproduction.

The Statistics of the Free City of Frankfort-on-the-Main. By
LIEUT. COLONEL W. H. SYKES, F.R.S.

[*Read before the Statistical Section of the British Association at York,
September 30th, 1844.*]

I AM not aware that the statistics of a German city, more particularly a free city, are before the public. Independently of the novelty of such statistics, I presume they will furnish matters for comparison with statistical facts from England, either confirmatory of apparent physical or moral laws deduced from series of facts, or exhibiting antagonist matters which may render further research necessary, both in our own and other countries; that all doubts may be removed of the quality and bearing of the data with which the legislator may propose to operate in